


MEMORANDUM FOR: Members, SAFE Steering Committee

FROM: Harry E. Fitzwater
Deputy Director for Administration, CIA

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Vice Assistant Director for Resources and
Systems, DIA

SUBJECT: SAFE Audit Report

1. At the Steering Committee meeting on 8 April, following the presentation of the results of the audit of the SAFE project, ~~several~~ objections regarding the audit findings were voiced. We were ~~requested~~ ^{directed} to resolve any outstanding issues and report back to the Committee.

2. We find the number of issues of significance remarkably small, considering the harsh criticism leveled by the audit report at those who have been responsible for the management of the SAFE project. Setting aside questions of technical inaccuracy which do not have an impact on the conclusions and which stem from the sharply limited time available to the audit team, the following points have been put forward by the CSPO team as issues deserving the attention of DIA and CIA management:

a. On the subject of requirements, the report seems to contradict itself (a point admitted by the audit team). CSPO points to extensive negotiation with customer organizations on requirements and their priorities, and asserts that contact between contractor and users has been encouraged.

All agree that uncontrolled communications between TRW and end users could lead to chaotic direction to the contractor. CSPO concurs that the communication of the requirements to the contractor has not been effective.

b. The task given to the developers of SAFE was to provide an integrated environment to the end user. It is not obvious to CSPO personnel that modification of existing software packages will provide the requested integration with less risk, and they question whether the resulting system will in fact be more extensible, reliable, and economical than the system they were developing. They agree that the integration they sought is beyond the present state-of-the-art and does not provide for incremental deliveries modified by feedback from user experience.

c. According to CSPO, the funding authorities recognized that SAFE was to be a system developed from state-of-the-art hardware and software and that a significant portion of the funding was for software development. They question whether the best approach is to start over with existing software packages. They recognize that there is little evidence that TRW, or any other development organization, could successfully develop and implement a design for the present set of requirements, but ^{many} ~~they~~ believe the existing design could be completed.

g. CSPO rejects the charge that they became a competing design organization. They intentionally avoided giving technical direction to TRW. Their primary interaction with TRW has been in validating the design as one which can support SAFE requirements.

h. CSPO does not find in the report a logical progression of reasoning which leads from the findings to the recommendations. The findings, in tone if not in words, recommend termination. CSPO would like to see an elaboration of the risk reduction philosophy.

3. Discussion with members of CSPO reveals that although they felt impelled to put forward these concerns about the audit report, they remain totally committed to the development of SAFE. They are prepared to accept revised instructions, guidelines, and development strategies, and understand that other considerations may cause the managers of the two agencies to seek a lower risk path to the development of SAFE. It is particularly worth noting that who articulated some of CSPO's concerns during the last meeting, is eager to remain with the project and to help develop SAFE along whichever development path management selects.

4. The concerns expressed by the members of CSPO are legitimate and came as no surprise. Their commitment to the program is nothing but commendable, and their views on the

prospects for the success of the development effort were well known. The fact remains, evidence of serious problems was sufficiently strong to lead to the serious step of program audit, and whatever flaws may be found in the report of a team which was given extremely short deadlines, their conclusions reinforce our conviction that some form of redirection is called for.

5. New project directors have been designated, both in TRW and in CSPO. The contractor has been apprised of the nature of our concerns, and he has been asked to explore alternative development strategies. The specific recommendations of the audit team should be treated as inputs to the total process; the next step is to let the new managers develop some alternative courses of action, with cost and schedule estimates, for consideration by the two agencies. It is early to estimate how quickly these alternatives can be developed, but no time will be wasted. The three senior officers from CSPO will spend next week with TRW in California beginning this process.

STAT 6. On 13 April we met for the first time with our newly formed Technical Advisory Board, comprised of [redacted] from NSA, Jim Croke of MITRE, Willis Ware of Rand, and Ron Wigington of Chemical Abstracts, Inc. They received a general briefing on SAFE and its present troubles and expect to ^{be} ~~the~~ reconvened when we have some alternative development strategies to discuss.

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